JOHN RUSKIN.

A TWO-VOLUME STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOHN RUSKIN. By W. G. Collingwood, M. A. With Portraits and other Illustrations. Two Volumes. Pp. xiv., 260, xxi.; vi., 261-565, xxxi. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

These volumes are the result of an intelligent and painstaking effort to treat Ruskin's life and writings in accordance with a theory (one is led to suspect sometimes that in essential points it is his own) which leaves none of his work to stand alone, but links all together as a growth, keeping time in its variations with the changes which years brought to the man himself. Such a theory can easily be overworked, and it is just possible that it will be found on second thoughts to have been overworked in his biography. One of the most characteristic phases of Mr. Ruskin's literary activity has been his determination to work over into new forms the writings which had taken their place among English classics. He has learned, as we all know, that his readers did not uniformly take kindly to this process. In the last twenty years the fact has been brought out with emphasis. It is one of the lessons of literary craftsmanship which should be heeded. Speaking of various changes in purpose which had to be made in later years because of Mr. Ruskin's failing health, Mr. Collingwood says:

Many other plans had to be modified, as Mr. Ruskin found himself less able to work and was obliged to hand over his business to others. With his early books he had been dissatisfied, as expressing immature views. "The Stones of Venice" had been recast into two small volumes, and "St. Mark's Rest" written in the attempt to supplement and correct it. But the original book was obviously in demand, and a new edition was brought out in 1886. "Modern Painters" had been also on the condemned list. The strong Protestantism and the geological theories involved in his descriptions of mountains made him reluctant to reprint; moreover, at the time of the last edition published by Messrs. Smith & Elder (1873), he had been told that the plates, which he considered a very important part of the work, would not stand another impression; and so he destroyed nine of them, in order that no subsequent edition might be brought out in the original form. He reprinted vol. ii in a cheap edition, and began to recast the rest, with annotations and additions, as "In Montibus Sanctis" and "Coeli Enarrant"; while Miss S. Beever's Selections ("Frondes Agrestes") found a ready sale. But this did not satisfy the public, and there was a continual cry for a reprint, to which at last he yielded. Early in 1889 the "Complete Edition" appeared, with the cancelled plates reproduced. Copies of the original edition had reached the price of £50, and their owners not unnaturally felt aggrieved at the depreciation of their property. But the new edition was not an exact reproduction of the old. No connoisseur would accept photogravure reproductions and modern copies as equivalent in value to autograph etchings and old masterpieces of engraving, and the edition of 1888 (as it is dated), however useful to the general reader, cannot replace the original on the shelves of the intelligent book-lover. Indeed, in spite of the rapid sale for the reprint, which shows the reality of the demand, the earlier edition is now regaining its value in the book market.

The sic vos non vobis of the legendary verses attributed to Virgil apply nowhere with more accuracy than to an author. He neither works for himself nor by himself. And this was true above all others of Mr. Ruskin. It was, of course, true of the first edition of "The Seven Lamps of Architecture," as Mr. Collingwood says, that—

The plates were engraved by himself in soft-ground etching, such as Prout had used, from drawings he had made in 1846 and 1848. Some are scrappy combinations of various detail, but others, such as the Byzantine capital, the window in Giotto's Campanile, the arches from St. Lo in Normandy, from St. Michele at Lucca, and from the Ca' Foscari at Venice, are effective studies of old buildings, seen as they are shown us in Nature, with her light and shade added to all the facts of form, and her own last touches in the way of weather-softening and settling-faults, and tufted, nestling plants.

So far it might be difficult to point to an association in the work. But, as a matter of fact, these illustrations satisfied neither Mr. Ruskin nor his admirers. Unconsciously, perhaps, it was felt that for so much that was strange in the way of criticism the testimony of more than one mind was needed. "The Stones of Venice" met this necessity.

The illustrations to the new book were a great advance upon the rough soft-ground etchings of the "Seven Lamps." He secured the services of some of the finest engravers who ever handled the tools of their art. The English school of engravers was then in its last and most accomplished period. Photography had not yet begun to supersede it; and the demand for delicate work in book illustration had encouraged minuteness and precision of handling to the last degree. In this excessive refinement there were symptoms of decline; but it was most fortunate for Mr. Ruskin that his drawings could be interpreted by such men as Armytage and Cousen, Cuff and Le Keux, Boys and Lupton, and not without advantage to them that their masterpieces should be preserved in his works, and praised as they deserved in his prefaces. Sometimes, as it often happens when engravers work for an artist who sets the standard high, they found Mr. Ruskin a hard taskmaster. The mere fact of their skill in translating a sketch from a notebook into a gem-like vignette encouraged him to ask for more; so that some of the subjects which became the most elaborate were at first comparatively rough drawings, and were gradually worked from successive retouchings of the proofs by the infinite patience of both parties. In other cases working drawings were prepared by Mr. Ruskin as refined as the plates.

Here it may be certainly inferred that the benefit was not merely the one mutual to author and artists, but that the readers also shared the advantages of the many-sided treatment of the various themes, which was bound to be the result of a partnership so far-reaching, even though the head of the firm was a man of the most intense convictions and supremely autocratic in enforcing them. The fact that others could express his ideas was more convincing than all the artistic work which he himself could have done by way of supplementing his descriptive analysis. Once convinced, the public, as in all other similar cases, must feel that all afterthoughts weakened the propositions which it had accepted as true. The plea of opinions changed with changing years can never be accepted as an adequate excuse for sweeping modifications in works that have made a place for themselves in literature. Curiously enough Mr. Ruskin's own reasons in later life for being dissatisfied with "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" had little if anything to do with changes in his own mind. Says Mr. Collingwood:

The author's own opinion thirty years later was that the book had become the most useless he ever wrote; "the buildings it describes with so much delight being now either knocked down or scraped and patched up into smugness and smoothness more tragic than uttermost ruin. But I find the public still like the book, and will read it when they won't look at what would be really useful and helpful to them: . . . the germ of what I have since written is indeed here, however overlaid with gilding, and overshot, too splashily and cascade-fashion, with gushing of words."

Most men find as they grow older that they were too effusive and enthusiastic in youth; but it is to be suspected that few would give the world the trouble of throwing aside a book which it had learned to like in order, not to contradict its matter, but to chasten its form and denude it of a greater or less number of words. The reader who patiently traversed the whole field of Ruskin's literary activity would probably find less change in the substance of his opinions from first to last than in almost any other great author. But in manner he would find endless change, and one is sometimes led to think that Ruskin, by nature an artist, has forgotten that manner, which is the substance of art, is only an external phase of literature. It has been what he had to say which drew the people to Ruskin: and the wondrous power of his thought is now associated forever with the style in which his thoughts were clothed. The cascade-fashion, the gushing of words are as permanently associated with the enthusiastic writings of his youth as the volcanic outbursts, the tempestuous earnestness of his later years. In his many-sided executive capacity he has had few rivals in his days. As his biographer remarks:

He could have been a painter if he had devoted himself to painting—not a Turner, or a Titian, but a sound practitioner much above the average. The same may be said of his verse-writing. In the year 1850 his father collected and printed his poems, with a number of pieces that still remained in manuscript, the author taking no part in this revival of bygones, which, for many reasons then, he was not anxious to recall—though his father still believed that he might have been a poet and ought to have been one.

In the very latest years Mr. Ruskin himself consented to a more complete revival of those early essays in verse, not wisely as some think, for the facility displayed in those pieces strengthens the feeling that Mr. Ruskin has deceived both himself and his readers as to the depth of thought in some of his works by his skill in expression. It is useless, however, to go into these questions. Let it suffice to point out that both he and Carlyle inveighed much against the very democracy, the uprising of which made possible their own existence as writers and as leaders of thought; that this democracy grows still in spite of rebuke, and that it even takes these harsh mentors, these worshippers of the master, the hero, and the tyrant, to its bosom. Think what words Mr. Ruskin has flung in the face of the nineteenth century, and then try to imagine him as a force in any past age. While it is easy to overestimate the importance to the world of the changes in the substance and method of Mr. Ruskin's thought and expression they cannot be too highly valued as individual phenomena. The two volumes in hand, with a collection of his works, contain a record of the deepest interest to the student of the human mind, a record which for completeness and for the innerwise view it gives has rarely been equalled. The biographical narrative can hardly be called entertaining as compared with certain masterpieces which every reader will recall: Mr. Ruskin himself has a nature too intense to be merely entertaining, and he has few of those eccentricities which make the lives of many great literary men amusing. Themes that would be a cause of endless gossip to idle tongues—for example, the unhappiness of Mr. Ruskin's married life—are barely alluded to by Mr. Collingwood. In 1847, after a severe illness, he went to Scotland. His biographer adds:

On his way back he stopped at Bower's Well, Perth, where his parents had been married, and in accordance with their wishes proposed marriage to the young lady for whom, some years earlier, he had written "The King of the Golden River." She had grown up into a perfect Scotch beauty, another Fair Maid of Perth, with every gift of health and spirits which could compensate, as they thought, his retiring and morbid nature. And if she, by obedience to her own parents, got the wealth and position they sought for her, on the other hand the dutiful son easily persuaded himself that he was, after all, the luckiest of mortals.

But the woman whom he had thus chosen, or who was chosen for him, had no part in his life. The sequel is given by Mr. Collingwood in a manner constrained and almost mysterious:

His habit of industry not only enabled Mr. Ruskin to get through a vast amount of work, but it helped him over times of trouble, of which his readers and acquaintances, for the most part, had little idea. To them he appeared as one of those deities of Epicurus, sipping his nectar and hurling his thunderbolts; or, when it pleased him, showering the sunshine of his eloquence upon delighted crowds. He had wealth and fame; the converse of wit and genius; the delight of travel, and intense appreciation of all the pleasures that travelling afforded. The fancy of the outside public pictured him in the possession of rare works of art, of admiring friends, of a beautiful wife. They did not know, as we do, the strange, ill-omened circumstances of his marriage; they had not followed him about, as we have, from place to place, and seen him in continual suffering and struggle of mind and body; they could not guess, as the thoughtful reader can, the effort needed on his part to do what he believed to be his duty toward a wife whose affection he earnestly sought, but whose tastes were discordant with his; nor, on the other hand, the disappointment and disillusioning of a young girl who found herself married, by parental arrangement, to a man with whom she had nothing in common; in habits of thought and life, though not so much in years, her senior; taking "small notice or austerely," of the gayer world she preferred, "his mind half-buried in some weightier argument, or fancy-borne, perhaps upon the rise and long roll" of his periods. And his readers and the public were intensely puzzled when she left him. To his acquaintances, however, it was no great surprise, though, with one exception, they took his part and fully exonerated him from blame. He, with his consciousness of having fulfilled all the obligations he had undertaken, and with an old-fashioned delicacy and chivalry which revolted alike from explanation and from recrimination, set up no defence, brought no counter-charges, and preferred to let gossip do its worst. It was only the other day that a public lecturer, who had quoted a passage of Mr. Ruskin's, was asked whether it were not true that Ruskin had run away with somebody's wife. That is a very mild version of the lies that, at one time or other, have been current about him, scandals which have had all the more weight because he never cared to speak out for himself, even to people who believe that they are his intimates. There are many tales whispered behind his back that are perfectly true—of somebody else, of different people who have been his friends, at one time or another—people whose reputation he values, it seems, more than his own. So much so, that while he gossips about early days and youthful follies, laments the mistakes of his life and disappointments of his age, he has never let one single word escape to clear his own character at the expense of others. And this is the man they call an egoist.

But if he could forget this trouble in boundless industry, it was not so with the real tragedy of his life in 1872. Every line of his subsequent writings, so far as they touched upon religion, must have renewed the anguish of a bitter parting. Says Mr. Collingwood:

It was an open secret—his attachment to a lady who had been his pupil, and was now generally understood to be his fiancee. She was far younger than he; but at fifty-three he was not an old man; and the friends who fully knew and understood the affair favored his intentions, and joined in the hope, and in auguries for the happiness which he had been so long waiting for, and so richly deserved. But now that it came to the point, the lady finally decided that it was impossible. He was not at one with her in religious matters. He could speak lightly of her Evangelical creed—it seemed he scoffed in "Fors" at her faith. She could not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. To her the alternative was plain, the choice terrible; yet, having once seen her path, she turned resolutely away. It cost her life. Three years after, as she lay dying, he begged to see her once more. She sent to ask whether he could yet say that he loved God better than he loved her; and when he said "no" her door was closed upon him forever.

The author of this book apologizes for violating the usual custom which delays the biography until the subject has passed away, but admirers of Ruskin will be glad to have a work which bears so many marks, unacknowledged it is true, but none the less plain, of his approval.

"THE NEW NERO."

Mr. Edgar Fawcett's latest novel, "The New Nero" (P. F. Collier), is a well-named reduction of some of the phenomena of physiology to the terms of the "realistic romance." For a character capable of such devilish machinations as those reviewed in the record which he gives, under the form of a novel written by an insane author in an asylum, it would be necessary to go back to the cruellest of the Roman emperors. There is a difference, however, between the hero of history and the hero of this essay in fiction, and it is a difference which touches the advance of modern science toward the elucidation of problems of cerebral disease. We can only assume of the Roman tyrant, if we grant the extent of his crimes, that he had a natural inclination toward the shedding of human blood, toward the infliction of painful injuries upon beings whose sufferings he could gauge better than he could those of wild beasts. The spectacle of agony gave him sensuous delight. In the case of his seven-fold murderer, Mr. Fawcett gives us an illustration of a form of disease for the comprehension of which we have to thank the physiologists of to-day and their investigations into nervous disorders. His "Harold Mountstuart" is a victim of what the French call "un idee fixe." Crime is not in itself a stimulus to him; but at the end of the aisle of gravestones which he proposes to erect over certain family connections he sees a fortune, and in his greed for wealth and the power it gives, all other sensations, whether springing from the commission of acts of violence or the occurrences of a healthy life, become secondary and relative. The passion for gold possesses him and carries him undisturbed of spirit past the lives obstructing his path, lives which he wrecks as he goes. He is the slave not of a general condition of mind, but of a motive which is stronger than his intellectual and moral forces. Mr. Fawcett's history of his progress through a lurid apparent sanity to a calm insanity is an ingenious application of the ideas of the clinic to the mechanism of novelistic writing.

THE POLISH ARISTOCRACY.

WHY POLAND DID NOT BECOME A NATION.

THE STORY OF POLAND. By W. R. Morfill, M. A., pp. xv., 389. G. P. Putnam's Sons. The Story of the Nations.

The lesson of this book, the one great lesson to be drawn from the history of Poland, is the uselessness of a selfish and tyrannical aristocracy. In spite of a historical method too obviously burdened with detail, and something of Freeman's anxiety to mention everything, without his genius for making his readers conscious of central facts, Mr. Morfill has not allowed the real problem of Polish nationality to escape him. Nevertheless he gives himself the air of stumbling upon it. He begins by formally describing the country and the people as they were in the days of Stephen Batory, when for a moment it seemed as if Poland might become all that both Russia and Germany are to-day, or, at all events, might carry on to the Caspian the power which then extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea. It has been remarked of Prussia that, as contrasted with Germany, she was wholly a political product. Certainly nothing could be more truly said of Poland than that the region in which several millions of people speaking the Polish language were intermixed confusedly with other millions who spoke any language in preference to Polish was never intended by Nature for an independent kingdom. "It had no natural frontiers—for indeed it was a vast plain open to incursions on all sides." But knowing what politics has made of Prussia, how different strains of blood have flowed together to make a masterful people, the wonder is not that Poland was dismembered—this might almost be called a figment of the imagination, if the phrase were not fixed in the historical tradition of Europe—but that it was never possible to make of her anything more than a heterogeneous collection of provinces.

One must go back to ancient Asiatic monarchies to find a parallel for Poland—those monarchies which, under a weak ruler, barely extended beyond the walls of the capital, and under a capable king extended in every direction for thousands of miles. In those kingdoms every petty chieftain was a king, and he paid tribute only when he was obliged to. In Poland this selfish independence of the lords was crystallized into a legislative and judicial system, the most extraordinary that ever afflicted a people who claimed to be united and to have a common tradition. The pride of the Polish nobility was compared in the times of so-called Polish independence to that of the Venetian aristocracy. The comparison flatters the arrogance of the Venetians. They took away from the Doge and from the people their political rights, but they can hardly be said to have made of the people something lower than the beasts of the field. A Polish peasant, freeman as he was at the outset, the owner of a bit of land for which he owed no other man homage, fell gradually to a condition in which he had no rights that any other human being was bound to respect. On the other hand, the Polish nobleman, arrogant as he was, was bound down by an inexorable law of custom. He could not engage in trade without losing his rank. Two results followed from this. In the first place, all those members of the nobility who became poor had to attach themselves to the few who were prosperous. The only privilege which they could retain, or which was of any value to them, was that of bearing arms, and of this they were so jealous that, as Mr. Morfill says, a peasant noble, ragged and barefooted, might be seen ploughing with a rusty sword hung at his side by a string. The other result was that the place of the thrifty middle class, the most valuable in other nations, was in Poland taken by foreigners, by Jews and Germans, who cared for nothing except individual profit, and took no political precautions save such as would lighten their own burdens of taxation. This class of necessity remained foreign. The nobles were withheld by pride of caste from descending into it. The serfs could not rise to it because they could not even make a beginning at the work of amassing wealth. The only hope for a peasant lay in escaping to the church. The child of a serf might rise in the priesthood. But the utmost vigilance was exercised by the nobles to prevent the loss of their slaves even in this manner. The serf could have legally no opinions of his own. His religion was fixed for him by his master. In law he could be an object of litigation, but he was without legal existence as a person. It is no wonder that Poland became proverbial as "the heaven of nobles, the paradise of priests, the gold mine of foreign adventurers and the hell of the rustics."

What is particularly worthy of note is that at the outset Poland was comparatively democratic. It was the bringing in of prisoners of war who were the personal property of the captors which cheapened agricultural labor and gradually rendered it impossible for the native farmer who had originally a portion of his land free of any service to a lord, and had done duty only for lands which he held by lease. But the lords had no occasion to lease their land when they had more captives to work it than they needed. The free peasant was confined to his own holding for his living. If he was employed by the lord, the terms of his service soon came to be no better than those accorded the personal slaves. Instead of owning the land, he came to be reckoned with it, though he could finally be bought and sold with or without the soil. To men in such a condition there soon ceased to be any incentive to labor. They worked when they were compelled to; they submitted to flogging. Their only relief was the pothouse and dance. As the lord drew part of his revenues from the liquor which they consumed, he encouraged their debauchery. Mr. Morfill indicates that the day for this sort of thing is by no means past. "We have seen," he remarks, "in our own days, in Gallicia, a complaint brought against a philanthropic ecclesiastic, who, pained at the intoxication of his parishioners, had induced many to sign the pledge. He was accused of diminishing the revenues of the local squire." This single example of feudal greed must have been the common thing all through the history of Poland.

The impossibility of raising up a middle class or of infusing anything like patriotism into an indistinguishable mass of down-trodden slaves reacted on the throne. The King of Poland could rarely be anything more than a figurehead except in time of war. Mr. Morfill calls attention to a remark of Professor Bobrzynski who "enumerates among the other misfortunes of Poland, the want of men of talent and energy among her sovereigns. She had some vigorous rulers such as Boleslas the Brave and Casimir the Great. 'Yet,' he continues, 'whereas France had Francis I., Henry IV., and Louis XIV.; England, Henry VIII. and Elizabeth; Spain, Charles V. and Philip II.; Austria, the Ferdinands; Sweden, Gustavus Vasa, Charles of Sudermania, and Gustavus Adolphus; Russia, Ivan and Peter—we have only a weak, honest man in Sigismund I.; Sigismund Augustus, who proved a coward in all matters where action and honest conviction were required, and Sigismund Vasa conspiring for our destruction. The genius of Batory shone, but only for a while; he created capable men, but had not time to improve our institutions. Of our later Kings, Ladislaus IV. merely deceived the country, bringing it into a worse condition, although with good intentions. Of Nisniowiecki and the Saxon kings it is idle to make mention. The genius of Sobieski seemed only created for war, and contrasts in a glaring manner with the mistakes of his policy. We may stop awhile to contemplate John Casimir and Stanislaus Poniatowski, but while we grant them merits we find them wanting in capacity and energy. The history of no other country shows such a cruel fate as ours.'" On the other hand, from the modern scientific point of view, the Polish aristocracy took every precaution against the possibility of a capable man ascending the throne. The principle of heredity which for a moment seemed likely to become the law of the kingdom was defeated. Every inference that can be drawn from the doctrine of environment was against the rise of an efficient ruler. Even if a great man reached the throne, he must have surpassed in executive force all the rulers of his time by just so much as the disintegrating tendencies of the turbulent nobility with whom he had to deal amounted to. A power from which so much was subtracted can not be compared on equal terms with the same power governing a nation practically united. The rebellions of the nobles often paralyzed the military expeditions of the Kings. Even the splendid career of Sobieski, which more than all else fixed the sympathy of the Christian world upon Poland, did not suffice to draw his nobles out of their selfish life. They were utterly wanting in patriotic feeling. "They seemed," says Mr. Morfill, "to have no sense of union; no realization of anything beyond family interest."

Such facts as these make it impossible to think of Poland as a unity, in the European sense of the term. "Freedom shrieked" a tiny polite shriek in the poet's closet, "when Kosciusko fell." But she had been mourning among the miserable peasantry on that bleak plain for ages, and she must have been pretty well used to chains and dismemberment. As for the aristocracy, the people who arrogated to themselves alone the name of the people of Poland, "there was nothing in the book of fate for such privileged tyrants but ruin, and however much we may lament the fate of Poland as a nation, it is impossible to feel great regret for the calamities which overcame her nobility."

Just as the wars of Poland contributed by the increase of slaves to the degradation of the peasantry, so, in turn, the necessity of making war induced the early dukes and kings to grant the privileges which proved fatal to the nation. The same reign—that of Casimir IV.—which saw a fugitive slave law passed, witnessed also the narrowing of the Diet by means of proxies. This was a step which might have led toward a really representative form of government; as a matter of fact, it seems only to have consolidated the power of the nobility. At every turn, when the necessity of king or people gave occasion, the nobles were ready with some new legislation in their own behalf, and at last came to the surface in national polities a device, as familiar to the Slavonic tribe as to some Indian political systems in America, by which a single member of a deliberative body could defeat all legislation. In 1651 the first instance occurred of a dissolution of the Diet by the liberum veto, the "I forbid" of one discontented member. Subsequently, the use of this privilege became frequent. It is easy to see how it was used by the rulers of neighboring and rival powers to paralyze action on the part of Poland. Corruption was rendered cheaper and easier than it has ever been in any other country known to history. The purchase of one vote was sufficient to release officials who deserved impeachment and trial for treason, to obstruct the levying of taxes and even to prevent measures of national defence.

Mr. Morfill has a suggestive and interesting chapter on the literature of Poland. A notable fact is the long persistence of Latin, not only as a literary language but in conversational use. When the Polish nobles went to Paris to invite Henry of Valois to accept the throne, they astonished the Parisians not more by the magnificence of their dress than by their readiness in various languages, and particularly in Latin; and it was a Polish ambassador whose facility in Latin discourse provoked a speech from Elizabeth of England that proved how lively a dead language could become on the lips of an angry queen. The works and strange career of Adam Mickiewicz are treated at considerable length, and he is described as "the representative poet" of his country, and with the single exception of Pushkin the greatest of the Slavonic race. But the poet's mystical notions produced in him an absurd affection for French imperialism. The most genuine utterances of freedom in all Polish literature seem to be the speeches and pamphlets of Hugh Kollontaj in the latter half of the eighteenth century, for he boldly urged the abrogation of the aristocratic privileges, though he favored hereditary monarchy. It is worthy of mention, as showing how incapable a Polish nobleman was of understanding liberty, that Kollontaj's most vigorous opponent, Severyn Rzewuski, coupled the names of Franklin and Washington with an argument that any reform might "even make it possible for a peasant to bring a nobleman before a court of justice."

The book is well illustrated with maps, views, copies of royal seals and the like, and as it is drawn from original and native materials is of special value, even in the very excellent series to which it belongs.

SAMUEL PEPYS.

A NEW AND MORE NEARLY COMPLETE EDITION OF HIS DIARY.

THE DIARY OF SAMUEL PEPYS, M. A., F. R. S., Clerk of the Acts and Secretary to the Admiralty. Completely transcribed by the late Rev. Mynors Bright, M. A., from the shorthand manuscript in the Pepysian Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge. With Lord Braybrooke's Notes. Edited with additions by Henry B. Wheatley, F. S. A. Vol. I. Pp. lix, 342. George Bell & Sons.

If the cynical remark of an Englishman be true, that every Englishman is at heart a lackey, then Samuel Pepys was beyond comparison the greatest Englishman who ever lived. In the noble game of tuft-hunting he could give points to every rival before his time or since, and then win with his hands in his pockets. The volume cited above, though it gives promise of considerable additions to the immortal diary, contains nothing and presages nothing in its successors which is likely to change the opinion of the world respecting the author as a man of great executive capacity, adroit in politics, inventive in official routine, tenacious of place, trifling in humor, majestic in his vanity. He may never have meant that his journal should be published, yet he left the key for its decipherment, and though he lived some years after its last pages were written, failed to put it into the only place where its secrets would have been safe—namely, the fire.

There is only one argument to show that Pepys meant to have kept concealed what Lowell so felicitously characterized as his "unbuttoned familiarity with himself," and that is the secretiveness of ordinary humanity respecting certain classes of individual traits and certain daily recurrent acts. But it must be remembered that the process of going over such a mass of manuscript as Pepys produced by little and little, even if it had been writ plain, became day after day and year after year more laborious. Memory, always ready to play the traitor, while seeming to keep a vivid grasp on the whole, would really treasure only those things most striking to the mind of the writer. Now there are some men with whom memory plays the disagreeable trick of recalling most vividly the episodes in their lives of which they are most ashamed. It could not have been so with Pepys. He was not, indeed, always content with himself. Sometimes when he made a night of it and rose the next day with a head that fitted neither his wig nor his hat, he called himself a fool. He besought God to forgive him for stringing his lute of a Sunday and for sleeping through a dull sermon; but his conscience does not seem to have troubled him much in greater matters. In memory he must have returned almost exclusively to those passages in his diary which showed himself to himself in the aspect which he hoped was the only one the world knew. How delighted he was when with the fleet to see that others came and went at his command! How rapt his contemplation of his own greatness as he gazed at a letter subscribed with the magic legend, "Samuel Pepys esq"; nor could his meditations have been less comfortable when he included in the inscription on a book-plate the words: "Descended from the antient family of Pepys, of Cottenham, in Cambridgeshire."

His conscience had even that wonderfully useful trait of putting the cap that fitted him on another's head, as when he went to church with a companion to whom he genially allotted all the rebuke there was in a "very eloquent sermon about the duty of all to give good example in our lives and conversation, which I fear he himself was most guilty of not doing." Witness also his fine scorn because "a venison pasty was palpable beef, which was not handsome." Needless to say, this was a feature of another man's dinner table. He called the naval officer who invited him to dine in a tavern and then "let me pay my club" a rogue; but when he practically forced others to pay his reckoning he remarked sedately: "I, by having but threepence in my pocket, made shift to spend no more, whereas if I had had more I had spent more as the rest did, so that I see it is an advantage to a man to carry little in his pocket." It upset his equanimity to lose a small sum of money; thus: "To Will's, where like a fool I staid and lost sixpence at cards," but if it were another's mishap he could hardly disguise his delight. "Here Mr. Symons, the surgeon, told me how he was like to lose his estate that he had bought, at which I was not a little pleased." When he recorded his outbursts of wrath at his wife's costly purchases, one can only regret that Mrs. Pepys did not also keep a diary. This regret is intensified when he gravely set down the discovery that she snored, or reported that "My wife and I had some high words upon my telling her that I would fling the dog which her brother gave her out of the window."

One of the most interesting passages in the volume happens to be a remark upon the various methods of pronouncing the diarist's name. From this it appears that at Magdalene College, the home of the Pepsyian Library, the accepted pronunciation is "Peeps," and that the evidence indicates this to have been sanctioned by Pepys himself, and by the descendants of his sister Paulina. Yet other branches of the family all pronounce it Peppis." Thus, curiously enough, the general pronunciation, "Peps," has no support among persons to whom the name belongs.

In outlining the plan of the present edition Mr. Wheatley writes that hitherto about one-fifth of the diary has been left unprinted, and adds that "It has now been decided that the whole of the diary shall be made public, with the exception of a few passages which cannot possibly be printed. It may be thought by some readers that these omissions are due to an unnecessary squeamishness, but it is not really so, and they are therefore asked to have faith in the judgment of the editor. Where any passages have been omitted marks of omission are added, so that in all cases readers will know where anything has been left out." He also asks "the kind assistance of any reader who is able to illustrate passages that have been left unnoted." One may well wonder—if the completed Pepys is a necessity to history—why the ordinary practice could not be followed of turning objectionable passages into Latin, or, if that did not serve, into Greek or Sanscrit. This device would at least enlarge the jury of intelligent people who could pass upon the trustworthiness of the editor's judgment, without adding appreciably to the general stock of revealed nastiness.

LITERARY NOTES.

Mr. W. D. Howells denies the report that he is going abroad for a few years. Mr. Howells says that he finds an abundance of charming characters in American life, in whom he is chiefly interested, and about whom to write; and that he has no need to go abroad to study European models.

Dr. Eggleston, it is reported, will remain at Madison, Ind., until he completes his present task of re-writing his "Hoosier Schoolmaster."

Mr. Richard Harding Davis has completed his series of articles on the shores of the Mediterranean, and the Harpers will soon print them. "The Rock of Gibraltar" is the title of the first one. This—and all the others—will be illustrated.

Here is Coleridge as Leslie Stephen sees him: "He was a man, as the psychologists would tell us, in whom the intellectual and the emotional natures were developed with amazing richness, but in whom the will had been simply left out. His life was therefore a process of dreaming and drifting: conceiving vast projects and getting half-way through the necessary prolegomena: leaving books unfinished, but writing enough on the margins of other books to make volumes of pregnant suggestions; flowing out voluminously in any direction upon any stimulus, but never keeping to one channel; and complaining of his inability to work in lengthy letters requiring twice as much labor as the work which he declined." Mr. Stephen is advising every one who wants to know Coleridge to read Mr. Dykes Campbell's "Life" of him. It is prefixed to a new edition of Coleridge's poems just brought out.

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt's "Wilderness Hunter" is in the press of the Putnams. It is an illustrated account of the big game of this country, accompanied by notes on the pursuit of it with horse, hound and rifle.

Mr. John Kendrick Bangs has written a novel which is said to be in a humorous vein. It is to be called "Tappleton's Client," and it will be published by Webster.

The late John Addington Symonds, it is noted, was a singularly copious and charming writer of letters. An old friend says of him: "A man of extraordinarily wide sympathies, he had a remarkable gift of divining the mind behind the written word. If he suspected a kindred or interesting personality from a poem or article he would instantly write to the author. In this way he formed many new acquaintances and friends, and kept himself 'au courant' in a most astonishing manner with the newest and youngest developments and spirits in art and literature. He detected in this manner genius, and anticipated the success of Rudyard Kipling at least half a year before that writer began to 'boom' in England. He was with persons as with ideas, equally at home with the high and low. A lover of family history, heraldry and pedigrees, he was, withal, a true democrat; one who treated his servant, or his driver, or his boatman as his real equal, and who found among laborers in England, gondoliers in Venice—above all among the solid and sterling, if apparently stolid, peasantry of Graubunden—some of his most constant and best friends. Life, he said somewhere, is larger than literature, than art, than science; it does not exist for them, but they for life."

Mr. Henry B. Fuller has written a novel concerning life in a big business block in Chicago, and has given to it the odd name of "The Cliff Dwellers." It is to be published as a serial in "Harper's Weekly." This young gentleman's work has not, it must be confessed, been justifying the extravagant anticipations of the readers of his first story; and this new novel will be watched with special interest.

T. R. Sullivan, the Boston novelist and dramatist, is pronounced an accomplished scholar by "The Book Buyer." It adds that, although he never went to college, he has taught himself not merely French and German, but Italian, Spanish and Latin, and he has lately taken up the study of Greek, so that no paths of literature may be dark to him.

Mr. Sullivan is descended from James Sullivan, who was Governor of Massachusetts in 1807-8. Until 1888 the novelist was engaged in business life, part of the time being in the service of a banking firm in London and Paris. When he returned to Boston he attempted to give his days to business and his nights to literature, but that plan was not long tolerable and he has now relinquished the counting-room.

Miss Yonge is about to bring out a new book with an astonishing title—namely, "Grisly Grisell; or, The Laidly Lady of Whitburn." It is a tale of the Wars of the Roses.

Mr. Anstey-Guthrie's clever burlesques on Ibsen's gloomy plays are to be printed in book form soon under the title of "Mr. Punch's Pocket Ibsen." They were brought out originally in "Punch."

A series of "Stories from Scribner," complete in six little volumes, will soon be brought out. The best short stories which have appeared in the magazine will be included in these volumes, the first of which will be called "Stories of New-York." The second volume, entitled "Stories of the Railway," will be followed by "Stories of the South," "Stories of the Sea," "Stories of Italy" and "Stories of the Army."

There is a deep and noble feeling in Maarten Maartens's "Contestatio," a poem which the Dutch novelist has contributed to "Temple Bar." Perhaps it is not really poetry, but there is the soul of poetry in its aspiration:

Then by that deeper life which meets my own,
The while the crowds unheeding pass their way,
And cheat and chatter through the live-long day,
Then by that strength of love which doth enthrone
My love in all that lives, no more alone,
King among equals, ruling to obey,
Then by the harmonies of earth and heaven,
Which, thrilling through the universe, have smote
Thy thousand singers of the heart and throat
To one all-thankful, all-triumphant note,
Then by the sympathy which thou hast given,
And by the veil which, from thy darkness riven,
Reveals some deeper glory of the whole,
Then by the inner answer of my soul—
Men's little cooking-fires make smoke, not night,
And even in thy sun's all-radiant sight—
Nay, falter not, O heart!—my little light is light!
And thou myself, who art
The poetry of the human heart,
Who knowest all my weakness, and the lie
Within me, and my love's despairing cry,
Who gavest wings, teach thou me how to fly,
On high for evermore, and evermore on high!

"Shakespeariana" is no longer under the editorial direction of the Shakespeare Society. It will be continued under independent editorial control, and it is proposed to broaden its scope and make it in many ways valuable to the student of English literature.

Mr. Arlo Bates solemnly declares that the only thing which the Theatre of Arts and Letters has done which is really of significance is the performance of Miss Wilkins's "Giles Corey, Yeoman." But Mr. Bates's declaration was made apparently before Mr. Aldrich's "Mercedes" was played.

A new novel by Lloyd Bryce is announced. It is to be called "Friends in Exile" (which recalls "Friends in Council") and is a story of diplomatic life in foreign lands.

The Duchess of Cleveland has been writing an historical study of Kaspar Hauser, and Macmillan will print the book. This brilliant lady, now seventy-four years old, is the mother, by her first marriage, of Lord Rosebery.

INTERVIEW WITH AN AUTHOR.

FROM OUR ESTEEMED CONTEMPORARY, "THE DAILY HUE-AND-CRY."

A reporter of "The Hue-and-Cry" yesterday found Sir Charing Cross Bowbell, the popular and famous English novelist and poet, snugly ensconced in a pleasant suite of apartments at the Rule Britannia Hotel in Fifth-ave. The reporter had expected to experience considerable difficulty in gaining admittance to Sir Charing, so many stories of his hauteur and exclusiveness, having come across the pond, and was accordingly prepared to disguise himself as a bell-boy or a chambermaid to accomplish his purpose; but this stroke of enterprise was not necessary, as the gentleman instantly sent down instructions that the reporter be shown up.

On entering the apartments the reporter was met with a hearty hand-shake by the celebrated man and asked to sit. Sir Charing was dressed in light, perpendicularly-striped trousers and a plum-colored dressing-gown. He is seemingly about forty years of age and wears a full beard. The ends of his mustache are curled up, apparently with an iron, though it was evident to the reporter that the beggarly valet had not re-heated the iron during the operation, as the curl on the right side was considerably more pronounced than on the left. Sir Charing is somewhat bald, but there is still a merry twinkle in his eye. "Of course," he said in a bluff, jovial manner, "in London one can't see everybody, but in America, ah, that is different, you know. And then, 'The Hue-and-Cry'—who has not heard of it?" The reporter bowed in acknowledgment of this handsome, albeit deserved, tribute to the leading paper, and asked Sir Charing how he liked America.

"Very much very much," replied Sir Charing. "It is a grand country. Of course, having landed only this morning, I have not had much opportunity to study it as a whole, but I know I shall like it. Your people are so charming and hospitable, and, I may add, intelligent. Really, it is delightful—and astonishing. And they welcome one so heartily. Why, do you know, they seemed to expect me. I had intended my coming as a surprise and had no idea that it was generally known. Do pray tell me, if you can, how it got out?"

The reporter asked Sir Charing to step to the window, and pointed to the bill-board on the opposite side of the street as a partial explanation of the mystery. Sir Charing adjusted his monocle with a well-bred air, and, as astonishment deepened on his face, read, in letters eighteen inches high: "Coming! Sir Charing Cross Bowbell, the celebrated author of 'A Milkmaid's Love' and 'The Darkness of Africa.' Lectures and readings. Secure seats early!" At first Sir Charing seemed dumfounded. Then he turned to the reporter and said:

"Really, most extraordinary! Who could have done it—your Lord Mayor?"

"No, Sir Charing," replied the reporter; "your manager, General Hopkins Whackabout, of the Whackabout Lecture and Stereopticon Bureau."

"Well, well," laughed the poet as he resumed his seat, "how extraordinary. I remember General Whackabout now. I had some correspondence with him, come to think of it. And I dare say the sly dog has had paragraphs put in the papers about me, too, eh?"

"Yes, sir," returned the reporter, "he has. Yesterday your press agent was arrested for annoying editors on the street."

"Young man, you astonish me. Really, I—did Mr.—er—General Whackaround provide another—er—man, you know, to take this one's place?"

The reporter assured Sir Charing that he had, and then asked for some incidents of the visitor's varied and interesting life.

"Do you really think the readers of 'The Hue-and-Cry' care about me? Well, well, perhaps—one sometimes reckons oneself too lightly. Let me see, let me see," and the great author threw his feet up on a chair, and a thoughtful, faraway light came into his poetical eyes. "What can I say that will interest the thousands of readers of the great 'Hue-and-Cry?' Ah, I have it—my first story, 'A Milkmaid's Love.' You know my books have been extraordinarily popular. I say it modestly, but it is a fact. My publishers print the first ten editions the first move they make, without taking the plates off the press. I sometimes have as high as three plays running at different theatres at one time. Then my poems, too, have an immense sale. But it was not this way once. No—far from it. Shall I ever forget that first novel! You know it is now in its four-hundredth edition, and has been translated into all the leading modern languages, with an edition about to appear in Volapuk. My young friend, I anticipated the trouble I should have in finding a publisher for that story, so I wrote it on parchment—good, first-quality, drum-head parchment. Subsequent events showed the wisdom of the move. I sent 'A Milkmaid's Love' to every publisher in Great Britain and Ireland. Every one rejected it. I used to wait at the postoffice when it was due with a new addressed wrapper and remail it to another publisher directly it came back. The clerk would open his window and pass it out saying, 'here's your "Milkmaid's Love," Mr. Bowbell.' Of course I was plain 'Mr.' then. How odd it sounds now. It took two years for that story to make the rounds of the publishing houses. It came out of the strife somewhat worn along the edges, but otherwise in good condition. Was I discouraged? Not in the least. I simply waited for new publishers to begin business, and as soon as I heard of one anywhere I sent him my story. 'A Milkmaid's Love' sometimes waited two weeks in the hands of the postal authorities for a new publisher to open his office and get ready to receive mail. Every postman in London knew the package, and I finally gave them the privilege of reading it odd hours while waiting for a new publisher to open. It became very popular among them. At last one of them, who had come into a good property on the death of a relative, started a publishing house himself and accepted my story. It took five editions to supply the demand the first week. In three months 100,000 copies had been disposed of, and I had 300 letters from publishers who had rejected it asking for my second work. Yes, young man, you may say for me to the American people, through 'The Hue-and-Cry,' that the young author has his trials."

"What are your plans for the future, Sir Charing?" ventured to inquire the reporter.

"I have no plans for the future beyond enjoying your magnificent country and revelling in your open-hearted hospitality. Oh, yes, of course, I shall lecture each evening, I believe, with a reading in the afternoon—General—that gentleman, you know, has arranged these things I doubt not. By the way, did you say that that man who attends to the press who was taken into custody was released?"

The reporter assured the distinguished visitor that he had been and rose to depart. "Oh," exclaimed the poet, "I must tell you before you go of a laughable thing which occurred to me this morning. Went to call on an old friend. Servant at the door said, 'What name, sir?' I drew myself up to my full height (Sir Charing is at least five-feet-six), and in a deep voice I said: 'You may tell your master that "The Darkness of Africa" has come.' I fancy the fellow had heard of my great poem, for he seemed much frightened and made off rapidly. Really, it was amusing," and the poet laughed heartily, the reporter of "The Hue-and-Cry" joining in with vigor. The brilliant novelist, poet and playright accompanied the reporter to the head of the stairs and wished him a warm godspeed. "Oh, I say," he called as the reporter was half-way down, "is it true that 'The Hue-and-Cry' had more bona fide want ads. than any other paper in the month of April?" The reporter assured Sir Charing that it was true and passed on. The distinguished guest evidently appreciates bright, breezy and brainy journalism such as is exemplified in "The Hue-and-Cry." See coupon on first page for voting as to which is the more popular, Sir Charing or the able American novelist and poet, Charles Peter Killgallon Shorthorse.

THEY HAD NEVER SEEN ROSES.

From The Pittsburg Chronicle.

Two ladies, managers, came into the school the other morning shortly after it had opened. One of them wore a beautiful jacqueminot rose, on which the eyes of the whole school were at once turned admiringly. Noting this, the owner of the flower gave it to one of the teachers for the children.

"Now, children, how many of you know what this is?" asked the young lady, holding up the flower. Nearly every little one shook his head to indicate ignorance.

One small boy and a couple of little girls piped out with great importance:

"It's a posie, please ma'am."

But no one had ever heard of a rose. Most of the children had never seen one before. The flower was passed along the line and small noses lingered longingly over its fragrance, while dirty little palms patted its velvet petals caressingly. No one saw or thought of anything that morning but the rose. The teacher put it in a glass of water to preserve it, and when school was dismissed each child was rendered supremely blissful by the gift of a tiny petal. As they filed out of the door each little waif clutched his treasure tightly in his small hand while he murmured softly to himself the name "Pitty wose, pitty wose."